1:Sanders Z-5.4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

793 courts. The village priest, therefore, acquires land and farms, in many
[423] cases just as diligently as the other villagers; he may even embark upon a
[441] few small-scale business enterprises on the side. His regular salary from
[571] the state gives him a steady income which the rest of the local people usually lack. This, combined with thrift and diligence, helps him acquire a little more property than the average farmer and enjoy a slightly higher standard of living. This is not guaranteed, of course, and one can call to mind many village priests who obviously were living on the barest minimum. At the same time, the priest is able to maintain what has been called
[554] a "comradely equality" with his people.[8]

[794] The priest, however, is not necessarily a permanent fixture. The bishop appoints him to a post and the local congregation can refuse him, or it can raise objections to a bishop about a priest who conducts himself in ways the local people do not like. In most cases, the bishop tries to find the kind of priest that the local parishioners prefer. Since the priest often ac-
● [428] quires land, as has been pointed out, he wants to pass that on to his children. He may try to persuade one son at least to follow him in the service of the church. In one Peloponnesian village I found that a priest's son now off at the seminary was coming back to succeed his father, thus making a fourth generation of priests from the same family serving that parish. When I mentioned this to bishops and others familiar with church matters, they pointed out that this was a common phenomenon, and even gave the names of villages where a fifth-generation member from the same family was ministering to the same parish.

Should a parish vacancy occur, the bishop, who is informed about it as a matter of course, announces in the local papers as well as in the church papers that there is a vacancy in such and such a village and that all qualified people may apply. He goes through the applications, selects the eligible candidates, and posts their names on the door of the cathedral, with the notice that anyone who knows any reason why these people should not serve as priests should inform the bishop. After due time has elapsed, he makes the choice, giving heavy weight, according to one bishop who discussed this, to educational qualifications and moral considerations.

793 In pursuing in greater detail the relationship between the parish priest
465 and the state, I learned that it was under the leadership of Archbishop
[659] (Metropolitan) Damaskinos, who played such an important part in helping his country through the politically troubled waters from German occupation back to self-government, that the priests were put on a salary paid by the state. Before that, they had been paid from fees and also by products from the parishioners. *Kondota*, or the subscription by families of so much wheat, eggs, olive oil, and such, to the priest if he would serve them was
[794] widely practiced before the present salary arrangement was made. In round figures, the parishes now contribute about one fourth of the amount

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

783 788 because the mere act of bringing whatever they had to contribute gave them an emotional uplift.

793 But still we had not seen the end of the bishop's good works. In 1949 he had organized a home for the aged where seventy elderly people live in [737] relative comfort. The most ambitious project of all, however, was a poly- [874] technic school started for the youth of the area. He had already spent about $37,000 on the first floor alone. The school had opened the previous [177] November (1952) and already had two hundred pupils. Here was an institution that the Marshall Plan had helped. The school bore the name Papaflessa, in honor of one of the Greek patriots of the war of independence. [743] While looking over this school we also learned about one more activity, a hospital of one hundred and fifty beds whose foundation had just recently been laid by the bishop and his coworkers.

793 794 The financing of even one of these undertakings, not to say the whole complement of institutions, would be a staggering task in any country, especially in one as poorly endowed as Greece. Although the bishop never confided the secret of his success, I heard from others that skillful diplomacy had stood him in good stead. He would start with a certain amount that he could take from his bishop's fund; he would then go to Athens and persuade the people in the Welfare Ministry that local people would match the funds of the central government if it would contribute; then, back home, he would call together the leading businessmen and say that he could get so much from the central government if they would put up such-and-such an amount. Since all parties did their share, he was able to get the necessary money for capital expenditures.

793 794 For the operation of these institutions, and their total number of inmates or patients is considerable, he draws upon other resources. Some of the people in his diocese upon death will to some specified institution their [428] homes, olive groves, or money. Instead of having an expensive memorial [769] service, with several priests, for a dead relative at the stated periods required by the church, the people are having simple memorial services and giving the difference in what they would pay to an institution; instead of buying expensive wreaths, they are giving the money to the foundling home, the sanatorium, or perhaps the old people's home. The bishop, too, has organized the rural parishes so that each parish turns over olive oil, meat, cheese, and eggs to a person who collects this produce and distributes it to the institution. Or, as already mentioned, some of the people want to bring their contributions in person. Many are asked to donate labor: one builds a door, another puts in windows, and everybody has a sense of participating.

Visiting the bishop raised many questions in my mind about all that I had learned in America about modern child-welfare practices, care of the [748] aged, and the like. Social work as a profession is just getting a start in Greece; much humanitarian activity is carried on by upper-class women of

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

ernment is at the present confronted. For Greece *has no surplus population*, and, if the country is to prosper, the services of every able-bodied man and boy are needed for the proper development of its natural resources. Weekly emigrant steamers carry large numbers to Western lands and bring but few back . . . with the consequence that many agricultural districts are left without labourers to till the soil" (p. 133).

For more on this emigration, see Theodore Saloutos, *They Remember America: The Story of the Re-Patriated Greek-Americans* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1956); and Henry Pratt Fairchild, *Greek Immigration to the United States* (New Haven, 1911).

18. The figures used in this presentation of land use are taken from *Greece Today* (August 1954); from Bickham Sweet-Escott, *Greece: A Political and Economic Survey, 1939–1953* (London, 1954); and from data supplied by the United States Department of Agriculture. In these three sources the years differ, as do some of the categories of land use, but the details prove interesting.

19. The study on idle lands made by the American Mission for Aid to Greece appeared in mimeographed form in 1952 and was based on detailed reports turned in by the field representatives of the Civil Government Division of the Mission. The report was issued by William M. Tait, who was then deputy director for field service. Other informants point out that in Epirus, and probably elsewhere, thousands of acres are owned by Greek-Americans in the United States, and Greek villagers do not feel free to make use of such idle lands.

20. For a discussion of these exports, see E. J. Bell, "Greece, Exporter of Farm Products," *Foreign Agriculture*, March 1958, pp. 5–6.

21. The use of lots in dividing up a patrimony among brothers in a Boeotian village is described in an article by Harry L. Levy, "Property Distribution by Lot in Greece," *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, LXXXVII (1956).

Chapter V. The Peasant at Work

1. The unpublished manuscript from which this comes is "Ta Laographika tes Kleitorias" (Concerning the Folklore of Kleitoria).

2. UNRRA, *Greece, Ripe for Improvement: A Study of Marginal Land Farming in Greece* (Washington, D.C., 1946), p. 8.

3. Robert P. T. Coffin, *Hellas Revisited*, p. 14.

4. Dr. Charles House, former director of the American Farm School in Salonica, played a great part in preparing the way for mechanization in Northern Greece, since the students at this school were taught how to operate and repair tractors long before they began to appear in so many villages. He said that one argument for the use of the tractor in preference to the draft animal was the fact that the animals ate up too much of the farm produce.

5. For the full World War II picture, see C. S. Stephanides, "Agricultural Machinery in Greece," *Foreign Agriculture*, XII (November 1948), 250–253.

6. Supplementary labor is an important element in the economy of many families and even whole villages. In the Peloponnesos people from the mountain villages can harvest olives and help with the pressing of the oil, receiving pay in kind. When they help with the vineyards they are paid in money, as they are in Macedonia when they help plant tobacco. Near Ioannina there are villages specializing in certain crafts from which many men go during the winter to ply their trades.

7. "A Tobacco Village in Xanthe Nomos," (1952, mimeographed), prepared by A. Argyropoulos. One of the village studies conducted by the Near East Foundation for the Greek Ministry of Agriculture and the United States Economic Cooperation Administration. The following comment about this village (Dafnon) by John D. Photiadis is helpful: "I have served as a county agent in that area and I think that Dafnon is not a representative village. It is considered the poorest village in the area and the most stricken by the reduction of prices of Turkish tobacco. This is because

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2

The Family: Economic Activities

THE STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES of the family as the most significant social unit in Vasilika will become clearer in the ensuing discussions. For the present, the family in the village may be defined as what has variously been called the "elementary," "nuclear," or "conjugal" family; that is, a husband and wife and their children. It is the welfare of his own family as a corporate entity which motivates the actions of the villager; and the family is the group whose members work in cooperation to try to maintain or to improve their common position. The villagers measure prestige and honor by the degree to which a family succeeds in fulfilling its obligations. From their point of view, the essential family obligation is to maintain a ratio between property and children such as to enable each child, when the property is divided in equal shares among all the children, to maintain, in turn, a decent standard of living for his family. This goal commonly requires not only an effort to conserve the wealth received from previous generations, but also, if possible, to increase it. The villagers act as if they conceive of the family as a kin group which conserves, accumulates, and transmits wealth from one generation to the next. The ability to transmit wealth is especially important. The villagers consider a man who is rich in lands but has no children an object of pity; the man's wife is considered even more unfortunate. This is because the contemplation of the success of their children gives the life of a married couple a large part of its meaning. In the operation of the inheritance and dowry systems in the region, a son may be given his share of the patrimony in the form of an education and a daughter given hers as her dowry at marriage. An educated son who has a civil service job in a town, or a daughter whose dowry was large enough for her parents to have found a schoolteacher husband for her, can give to the parents lasting inner satisfaction and the joy of being able to tell of their child's exploits. To be able to sit and watch such adult children, or even an industrious farming son, as they talk to visitors of their adventures, or as, on a feast day, they eat the food their

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4

The Family: Dowry and Inheritance; Formal Structure[1]

182 THE DOWRY AND INHERITANCE SYSTEM in Vasilika is primarily a mechanism by which property is transferred from one generation to the next. It is this kind of mechanism, but it is also more. By reason of the context of values in which they operate and because of their specific characteristics, dowry and inheritance patterns as they function in Vasilika have ramifications not only for the Boeotian countryside but also for Greece as a whole.

Inheritance by Sons

428 Both the Greek laws of inheritance and village custom require that property be divided equally among all the children, sons and daughters alike. Some receive their shares through inheritance or by gifts while the parents are still alive, but the daughters of a family are entitled to their share at marriage in the form of a dowry. Since, from the standpoint of the villagers, a man's most compelling obligation is to arrange for the successful marriage of his daughters, and since no girl in Vasilika can normally expect to marry without at least a token dowry, the girls have first lien on the family's property. For most of Vasilika's families, land holdings are the most valuable assets, and dowries are, therefore, calculated ordinarily as a transfer of a share of the land from parents to a daughter and through her to the jurisdiction of her husband. However, if a family's land holdings are such that it is obvious that by giving daughters their

[1] Portions of this chapter were presented as a paper at a conference on Rural Peoples of the Mediterranean held at Burg Wartenstein in July 1959, and will appear in *Mediterranean Countrymen*, edited by Julian Pitt-Rivers, Mouton and Co., The Hague, scheduled for publication in 1962.

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share of the land at the time of their marriage, the shares remaining for the sons will be too small to enable them to support their future wives and children, the family recognizes the problem and tries to make some adjustment that will prevent the threatened poverty. The villagers are well aware of the dangers of land fragmentation under a system of equal inheritance. The average land holding in Vasilika is already only one-third to one-fourth of what it was at the time the village was settled. Thanks to the introduction of irrigation and improvements in agricultural techniques (see Chapters 2 and 3), both the bulk of yields and the cash value of the crops in the area have increased to the point at which the farmers maintain a higher standard of living on the smaller holdings than their grandfathers did on the more extensive ones. But the process has its limits, and the future possibility of economically useless small holdings is a real hazard for Vasilika's families.

One kind of solution to its problem is for a family to try to train or educate its "surplus" sons for a nonfarming occupation; if possible, one that will send them to the towns and cities as white-collar workers or as professional men. This effort, however, is more than merely a solution to a recognized problem. Status as an urbanite has very high value for the villagers in its own right. As the previous chapter has shown, the families of Vasilika try to import urban ways into the village; their efforts to send their own sons and daughters directly into the towns and cities may now be discussed. For quite apart from the necessities of their situation, the people of Vasilika act as if they assumed that life in towns and cities is superior to life in a small village. This judgment is not based on a belief that there is necessarily greater economic well-being in the towns. On the contrary, the villagers believe it is more difficult to achieve a respectable standard in the larger centers and, indeed, that the plight of the poor is worse in the town than in the village. They say it is harder to have little when one is tempted by so much. But the villagers respect an educated man; education enables a person to pursue occupations which the villagers believe have greater prestige than farming, and the preponderance of these occupations are practiced in towns. Not only white-collar workers but also journalists, lawyers, doctors, writers, gymnasium and university professors congregate in the provincial towns and in Athens (cf. Antonakaki 1955:93). Even if a young man from Vasilika is not fortunate enough to work in one of these favored occupations—even if he is a tailor or a barber or an artisan of another type, or a small merchant—he is believed to acquire some aura of prestige simply by living in the more populous center.

The young girls of Vasilika want to marry into the towns because they are well aware of the greater physical ease and comfort available there and contrast these conditions favorably with the arduous and endless labor they are accustomed to in the village.

Still another incentive for gaining the status of a town dweller is the belief, in Vasilika, that life in town is more full of adventure and less monotonous than life in the village. Besides, the towns and Athens have crowds, and *polis cosmos* (many people) are enjoyed by the villagers for their own sake. A *paniyiri* or Easter is considered successful in proportion to the number of people

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are said to have neither brains nor self-control. Parents with marriageable children were, therefore, in 1961, contemplating the division of their estates into fewer portions than their parents had done before them.

As his children are growing up, a farmer calculates approximately what he must give his daughter or daughters for dowries and how much will be left for each of his sons to share. If it is fairly obvious that the share left for the sons will be insufficient to support each of them, the farmer tries to make some other provision for one or more of the boys. Any boy who shows promise as a student is encouraged to continue his schooling beyond the compulsory sixth-grade elementary school in the village. Education is so highly prized that sometimes even an only son who might inherit an adequate farm is allowed to continue his education if he shows ability in academic subjects. The next step after elementary school most commonly chosen by the villagers is the six-year classical or humanistic gymnasium which serves as a necessary base for any civil service or white-collar post, and also for further study in the university or in specialized advanced technical schools. Although there are some private gymnasia, most of the farmers of Vasilika have sent their sons to the virtually free public institutions (Antonakaki 1955:39). These are in the provincial towns or in Athens, so that although there is little tuition charge, the farmer must pay for his son's board and room, for his school supplies, and for adequate clothing. Whenever possible, children are boarded with an aunt or uncle who lives in the town, but even under these conditions, farmers pay a fee to the relatives to cover the cost of their children's care. Sometimes, to keep food costs down, a mother prepares a basket of bread, cheese, and perhaps a vegetable stew for her son, places it in the bus bound for the town in which the boy goes to school, and the boy picks up the basket at the bus depot.

Whatever the particular arrangement, schooling involves an expenditure of current income, and the farmers consider that the cost of educating a son is about equivalent to a major portion of his share of the inheritance. The Greek Civil Code makes a specific provision for this view by declaring that educational expenses beyond those normally to be expected from the economic position of the family may be counted as part of the inheritance (Section 1895). In Vasilika it is assumed that a gymnasium-educated young man will spend the rest of his life living in some town, and that he will receive only a token share of the land after his father's death or at the time of the division of the estate. His parents, brothers, and sisters remaining in the villages as farmers gain in social stature and in potential actual advantage from his residence in town in a prestige-giving occupation. Both the legal code and village custom, then, involve the recognition that when farmers or shepherds undertake to educate their sons beyond the village school, they are striving for an improved status position in the nation as a whole, and that if sons succeed in the new prestige-giving occupation, they are the agents of upward social mobility for the family. Among Vasilika's land-owning farmers, an educated son gives the village the added advantage of a larger amount of land to divide among the remaining children. For farmers and shepherds who have very small land holdings or none at all, the

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871 sacrifices necessary to keep an academically talented son in the gymnasium are
594 undertaken with enthusiasm, because such a son gives promise both of increasing
[428] the income of his family and of raising its social position.
[554]

Although not all of Vasilika's boys who start the gymnasium have sufficient talent or self-discipline to complete the course, a majority of them do so and give observable evidence of the feasibility of sending boys for advanced schooling. In 1959, of the thirty-four boys and young men who were between the ages of twelve and thirty and who were also sons of farmers, sixteen had attended or were then attending gymnasium, and three of the sixteen had received or were still receiving some education at a higher level. By 1961, as we have seen, a shepherd's boy had completed a year in gymnasium. Whether all these sons will succeed in finding employment commensurate with their educational qualifications depends, of course, on the economic development of the nation, and especially on the increased possibilities for employment in the towns and in Athens. In Vasilika each educated young man and his family hope that he will not have to return to the village to live.

[166] The pattern of educating sons is not a new one in the village. With few
[369] exceptions, the groups of middle-aged brothers and of young adult brothers and sisters in the village in 1961 could boast of one additional brother who was living in a town or in Athens, and each of these men had had some education beyond the village school. There were also two men in this age group who were living in the village but had had some gymnasium training.

167 A second solution to the problem of surplus sons well known in the his-
594 tory of Greece has been emigration out of the country itself. In the decade between 1910 and 1920 about four young men left Vasilika for the United States. One of these returned to fight in the Balkan Wars of 1912 and has lived in the village ever since. The other three are still in the United States. In the 1930's, one man left with his wife and child for Tanganyika. The extent of continuing association with these overseas relatives is different in each case; one man returned to Vasilika to visit his brother in the early 1950's and stayed for only a year; another wrote sporadically; a third disappeared and his son knew only that he had died in the States. The Tanganyika relatives, however, continually
[457] sent packages to their village cousins, and the son of the original emigré, who
[829] had died, returned to the village with his mother in 1959. The villagers always referred to the packages from Tanganyika as gifts from America and referred to the Tanganyikan, even after his return, as "the American." Apparently, the word
[123] "America" in the village is a generic term for an El Dorado abroad. However, emigration out of the country is not currently of interest to the villagers; no one in the village ever asked us for help in arranging the emigration of one of their sons to the United States, though joking references to our taking young people back with us were not uncommon.

166 Up to this point, then, we may conclude that the system of equal inherit-
369 ance of property and the villagers' approval of urban living have led to an
428 actual geographical movement of young men out of Vasilika and to a social
511 movement into occupations other than farming for young men who have grown up in the rural settlement. Another aspect of the situation is that income from

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land directly supports boys who live in towns both during their years in school and until they find a job. The possible importance of this for the urban economy of Greece will be discussed again in connection with dower wealth that is transferred to the cities.

Dowering the Daughter

The dowry shall be discussed first as the social mechanism by which daughters inherit property at marriage, and second as a mechanism for social mobility. In Vasilika, parents are obligated to arrange marriages for their children, and with few exceptions they do so. They most frequently look for spouses outside of the village. They expect that a girl will leave the village to live with her husband and that a farming son will bring his wife to Vasilika to live with him (technically, patrilocal residence). In Vasilika, when the villagers speak of the engagement of a man or a woman, they say, "He (she) has become engaged in Mirali;" or in Sfaka, or in Athens, or in whatever village or town the prospective spouse comes from. They explain the prevalence of exogamy, to which the phrase just quoted gives linguistic expression, by saying that it is too difficult to find, inside Vasilika, anyone who is sufficiently distantly related to be eligible for marriage.

The custom of the village prohibits marriage between relatives on both the mother's and father's side to the degree of third cousin. In a village with a total population of 216, in which there are six sets of adult brothers and one group of three men whose fathers were brothers, there will certainly be limits to the number of boys and girls eligible to marry each other. The number of families connected by kin ties in the village is even larger, however, because in each generation there are some marriages that do take place among fellow villagers and this, of course, relates some of the village's children to each other through their mother's line, even if their fathers have no paternal relatives in Vasilika. Kinship connections are further extended within the village by the ceremonial kinship ties of godparenthood. On the ground that any godparental relationship between two individuals automatically places not only the individuals concerned but both their elementary families into close kin relations, the Greek Orthodox Church prohibits marriages between the two families to the same degree that would be necessary if they were consanguineal; that is, blood relatives.

When a daughter is to be married, the father of the girl is believed to have ultimate responsibility for giving the dowry. However, the brothers' interests are involved, the mother is deeply concerned about the future of her daughter, and certainly the girl herself wants to know something about her prospects. In the informal discussions that go on within the family, everyone participates and expresses his point of view. The father alone, however, has the formal responsibility for conducting the negotiations, which are always carried on with the aid of a *proksenitis* or *proksinitra* (marriage intermediary). In the Boeotian countryside, this person (either a man or a woman) is a friend or relative, either

584 from the village or from the community of the prospective spouse, rather than a professional. On the groom's side, the father participates in the negotiations, but the prospective groom himself is present and active in the proceedings. His decision as to the minimum value of the dowry and the form in which he will accept it is the crucial one.

The dowry negotiations and the final marriage contract can be usefully discussed, therefore, as analogous to a commercial transaction in which each side tries to get the most value at the least cost. For the bride's father, the material 583 costs include the land and cash he must give as part of his daughter's dowry. 428 She is, of course, legally and customarily entitled to her share of the patrimony, but except for the cash, the determination of just how much is her share is not 423 easy to arrive at. A farmer, as we have seen, holds land in scattered parcels of different quality; some of the parcels are in the immediate vicinity of Vasilika, no more than an hour's walk away from the village; others may have been part of his wife's dowry and may, therefore, be near her village; his house has value, but since his daughter will not live with him, he cannot give her part of it. The problem is solved in Vasilika by making a rough estimate of the money value of the parents' property in terms of gold sovereigns (*lires*) and then determining how many *lires* a girl is entitled to. Since the end of the Greek Civil War in [436] 1949, the drachma has been stabilized, and the villagers as well as the rest of [454] the Greek population are gaining confidence in the currency. However, the belief that gold sovereigns, worth approximately $10 each in 1961, are the only trustworthy form of cash is still common in Greece, as is the hoarding of the sovereigns and the requirement that bills be paid in them. The villagers evaluate [435] property in terms of *lires* and always speak of a dowry as one of so many *lires*, regardless of whether the property transferred is cash or land or both.

593 Besides the property costs of the dowry, a farmer loses the labor of his daughter both on the farm and in the household. Finally, there is an emotional 152 cost to the parents, particularly to the mother, at the marriage of a daughter. A mother loses the companionship of a friend, a confidante, and a working partner in the house and the fields. Among the more prosperous farmers, girls marry in [582] their middle or late twenties. As a result mothers frequently have had many years of cooperation with grown daughters. The wrench at parting is seriously felt. Mothers in Vasilika openly lament the loss of their daughters and speak frequently of how much they miss their absent girls.

581 When a marriage is contemplated between families of equal wealth and 584 social position, for example, when the daughter of a farmer is being married to a man who expects to stay on his father's farm, and when his share of the farm has approximately the same value as what the girl brings in as a dowry, the negotiations are relatively straightforward. Each side can then limit itself to checking on the claims the other is making and to surveying the total situation. Is the yield of the land the girl is bringing what her father says it is? Will the son-in-law be entitled to the share of the land he claims he will have? Does the [593] boy have so many sisters that his father may die before they have been married off leaving the boy with the responsibility of dowering them? Is the father-in-law's house well enough equipped so that the girl will be able to live at approxi-

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mately the standard she had at home? How many brothers does the groom have who are also going to be farmers and who will, therefore, have to share the house itself, or for whom some housing provision must eventually be made? Because personal qualities of the prospective groom will influence the success with which he manages his own and his dower properties, a father asks whether the groom has a reputation for industriousness. Is there any danger that the groom will "eat" the dowry properties, as the villagers phrase a propensity for using capital resources for current needs or for luxuries? Are the groom's father and brothers sober men who will conserve property and work to get the best income from it?

In short, the bride's father wants to assure, insofar as he is able, the future well-being of his daughter and of her children. He also wants the emotional satisfaction of having been successful at making a good arrangement for her. One village father pointed to a field we were passing and explained that he had given it to his daughter as part of her *prika* (dowry), so that all the cotton from the field was for his grandson. He then went on to say that he had married his daughter well and said of his three-year-old grandson, "Who knows, one day he might become a lawyer or a doctor. He has a brain, the little one." The implication was that he, the farmer, had contributed to whatever the final destiny of his grandson might be by having supplied such good fields for his daughter's dowry.

A girl's parents also want assurance that she will live in a congenial household. They hope that the new mother-in-law and the groom's sisters will accept the girl with good grace and that she will be decently treated. A man's wife and daughter will always remind him of the resources the family has already expended on the trousseau and the skill with which they were woven. From the women's point of view, these are important parts of the cost, and they want a girl to go to a family which will appreciate both the quantity and the fine workmanship of the *rukha*. Some friction between a girl and her mother-in-law and sisters-in-law is accepted in Vasilika as part of the condition of marriage to a farmer. The severity of friction is mitigated, however, by the independent dignity a girl acquires by having brought her husband a dowry and by the pride her husband's family takes in their own skill at having helped arrange a good marriage for their son.

The groom's interest, on the other hand, is to supplement his patrimony with as much land and cash as he can get from his wife's dowry. After their marriage, the husband and wife will have jurisdiction over her dowry properties. Unless the marriage contract states otherwise, and it rarely does in marriages between a farmer and a village girl, the husband has the right to the management and control of movable and personal property that he received with his wife and the management of the real estate given as part of the dowry. The alienation of movable dower property requires only the informal consent of his wife, while the alienation of real estate requires a formal notarized consent statement from his wife and the permission of the court (Civil Code Sections 1416 and 1417). (The groom's father, therefore, is interested only from the standpoint of the general welfare of his son. He himself will have no direct control over his daughter-in-law's land or money.)

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lives in his wife's village and has married a girl from his own settlement and, therefore, has land near the groom's village. A farmer husband may even be willing to consider the sale of the land in his wife's village to make a good purchase nearer home. Neither of these possibilities may come to fruition for years, so that they may remain subjects for long-term discussion between a man and his father- and brothers-in-law. To summarize the situation, land given as one part of the dowry and village exogamy have the consequence of stimulating land exchanges and sales in the Boeotian countryside, of stimulating the visits of men among the villages in the region with a consequent exchange of views and ideas, and of providing an economic focus for maintaining some kind of relationships between affinal relatives, that is relatives by marriage. The system of transferring land as dowry has the effect also of permitting a man to utilize his wife's property throughout his married life instead of having to wait to do so until after his wife's father's death.

The actions of the villagers and the tone in which they discuss these questions suggest that although there is some sentiment attached to the land inherited from a father and to the land that were parts of a mother's dowry, the symbolic value of particular parcels of land as a link between generations does not usually take precedence over the economic value of the land as an income and food producer.

We have still to consider the question of the ultimate disposition of dower properties in marriages between farmers. The Greek Civil Code states that dower property must be accounted for separately from that owned or eventually inherited by the husband, and as we have seen, stipulates that the consent of the wife is required before dower property can be sold or exchanged. If there is a divorce, the wife is entitled to the return of the dower property or of its equivalent. In the house of the groom's father, the newly married couple is given a room in which they and, later, their children sleep. Here the bride's trousseau gives the room a personal touch. Both the young people work on the farm holdings of the groom's father along with his father, mother, and brothers, and unmarried sisters. They also work on the young wife's dower lands. The income from these may be pooled with that from the paternal holdings but need not be. The young husband's father has jurisdiction over the ordinary living expenses of the entire household and distributes the cash needed for purchases of clothing, food, and household equipment. During the lifetime of his father, the cash portion of the dowry may be invested by the son in additional land or in some other capital equipment such as a diesel pump. Under no circumstances do the villagers consider it proper to sell dower lands or to use dower funds for ordinary living expenses. Only the need for money for a very serious illness or for some other emergency is felt to justify such action. In whatever form, the dowry is considered capital which may be invested or saved to add to the estate available for the newly married couple's children.

After the death of the husband's father, the young man continues to live with his brothers, most of whom are likely to be married by now, until they decide to separate and divide the patrimony. This now consists of the property their father inherited from his father's patrimony, the dower property of their

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596 mother, and any additional properties acquired by their father in the course of
428 his lifetime.

Division of the Patrimony

The division of the property is always a dramatic event in the lives of the villagers. They believe that the separation of brothers is necessitated more by human than by economic considerations. They explain that brothers should be able to get along with each other and work together under the supervision of the eldest. Harmonious relations between brothers are highly approved in the village, and their maintenance is considered a moral obligation. But, the villagers will add, "What can you do?" When the wives and children of several brothers are part of the same household, inevitably they quarrel. One wife complains that her children's shoes are all worn out while her nieces and nephews are wearing new shoes. The matter of the work contributions to the joint household causes dissension; each wife tries to convince her husband that he works harder than the others. The children of one brother may cry at night and keep another brother and his wife from getting proper sleep. There also may be some envy if the dowry received by one brother is larger than that of the others.

The decision to divide the property may be delayed in spite of considerable disharmony in the household for several reasons. First, division implies a kind of moral defeat. Second, there are economic factors which favor the maintenance of a joint household. It cuts down on the consumption expenditures for each of the families; more women are released for work in the fields because the young children may be cared for at home by the grandmother or by only one of the wives; and the amount invested in farm animals and equipment can be held down because they are cooperatively used. Then, too, as one farmer puts it, before brothers divide the patrimony, it seems as if they have a lot of land and are earning a good living, but once the property is divided, each brother has little and then one sees that the family was not so wealthy after all. Appearances
[554] are important to the villagers, and a group of brothers may be reluctant to reveal the details of their economic condition. But the most important impediment to the separation of the brothers is the house itself. For the house is part of the patrimony, and if the brothers separate, the housing must also somehow be divided among them. There are several ways in which the villagers have solved this last problem.

342 When there are only two brothers involved, the house may be physically
596 divided simply by building a wall between two sets of rooms both upstairs and
428 downstairs. The brothers work together to improve both parts of the house so that each is of equal value and then draw lots to determine which brother gets which part (Levy 1956). Such houses are thenceforth called *dhipla* (double houses), and two or more families live in them as in entirely different establishments. Once the households are separated, a brother who has received cash in his wife's dowry is now able to make further improvements in his side of the house without regard for the other. There were four double houses in Vasilika in 1961.

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None were then occupied by brothers; their occupants were second and third generation descendants of the brothers who had originally put in the wall. The houses showed the effects of the long separation. In one of the houses, one side has been inhabited by a branch of the family that is losing its lands; that side has no additions and is in poor repair. The descendants of the other brother have prospered and have added some rooms and a terrace to their side of the house. In another case, both parts of the house have been expanded and modernized but in different ways.

Vasilika's houses are not ordinarily large enough to be divided into more than two parts. If there are more than two brothers, or if the paternal house is small, another solution to the housing problem exists. Here, the brothers agree to refurnish the ancestral house which one of them will continue to inhabit, and to build, in addition, new houses to the number of the remaining farmer brothers. The significance of the agreement is that the cost of the new houses and the repair and modernization of the old will be borne by the patrimony. Moreover, the brothers do not decide in advance which one is to have which house. That decision is made by drawing lots after the new houses are habitable and the old one has been improved. In a sense, the brothers agree jointly to improve the father's estate before they take their shares. The process is not different from that involved when the men in a joint household buy land which is added to the estate and is eventually divided among them. The process of building the new houses takes years (in one case where two new houses were built, the actual work took seven years) and during that time the brothers and their wives watch carefully to make sure that no one house is less well equipped than any other; for no man knows which of the houses it will fall to his lot to own.

The drawing of lots and thereby the division of the property does not have to await the completion of the new houses. As in the towns and cities in Greece, a dwelling is considered habitable at what to an American view is an early stage in its construction. Villagers will live in a house in which the ground-level rooms still have earthen floors, in which there is no ceiling to hide the rafters and to exclude the earth and dust that the wind sends through the roof, in which only the outer stone walls have been completed and the inner walls have not yet been plastered or stuccoed. Even at that, the cost of labor and materials for the basic stone or brick shell of a two-story house in Vasilika can absorb the surplus cash from joint holding of some eighty *stremata* for two or three years.

Once it is agreed that the new houses are ready for occupancy and that the old house has been sufficiently improved, the moment for the separation has come. The farmers are then joined by any town brothers they may have and they sit down together to evaluate the patrimonial property. No women participate in the deliberations. First, the men examine their land resources and make up sets of holdings of equal value. For example, if there are three farming brothers, virtually all the patrimonial land will be divided into three parcels; one parcel may have an extra *stremata* of vineyard as compared to the other two parcels, but that will make up for the fact that the second and third parcels consist of cotton lands which are slightly more fertile than those assigned to the

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first group of holdings. Once again, no brother knows which parcel of land will become his until after the drawing of the lots. Each man, therefore, has a strong incentive to see to it that the partition of the land holdings is as equitable as possible. If the mother of the men is still living, the brothers set apart several *stremata* of land which will become part of the share of whatever brother she elects to live with. This represents her dower right. Still other small parcels of land, on the order of five to ten *stremata,* are assigned outright to the brothers who are no longer farmers and do not live in the village. The token land is kept in their names, "so that they may remember their father," as one villager puts it. The conferees next turn their attention to their animal holdings and once again group these into parcels of equal value. Farm equipment and the outbuildings are treated in the same way.

Once the shares for each kind of property are decided upon, an enumeration of each share for each type of holding is written on a piece of paper and rolled up to resemble a cigarette. At that point, the women and children are called in and the time for drawing the lots has arrived. A neighbor or one of the children (never any of the adults in the family) is invited to draw the lots, first for the land, then for the farm animals, then for the equipment and outbuildings,and then for the houses. The moment is a tense one, for in spite of all efforts to equalize the shares some will be considered more desirable than others. The old house, for example, is not desired as much as one of the new houses, and the family that draws it may be disappointed. After the lots are drawn, the mother decides where she will stay. In one recent instance, she stayed with the brother who won the old house (he was not the eldest) because she felt more comfortable there. In another, the mother went with her younger son who had drawn a new house because his child was still small and her services as a baby-tender were needed.

When the whole procedure is completed, the personal effects of each brother and his wife and children are moved to the appropriate house, the furniture is distributed, and that night, for the first time, each family sleeps alone in its own establishment.

Descriptions given of the drawing of lots always convey the strong emotional involvement the participants have in the proceedings. The occasion heralds a change in the routines of life and in each family's attitude toward his property. The women tell of their tears and wails as they bid each other farewell before leaving to spend their first night in separate houses. They also describe their sensations of loneliness and strangeness under the new circumstances. The fact that the houses are almost always close together because they must be built on family-owned house sites in the village seems not to lessen the sense of dispersion as far as the women are concerned. The brothers continue as neighbors. They cooperate in agricultural activities much as unrelated neighbors in the village do: they borrow plows, draught animals, and other equipment from whoever owns it. In the meantime, the sisters-in-law may call on each other for help in the housework, they draw water from the same well, and their children visit freely in each other's houses. In other words, face-to-face associations con-

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tinue at only a slightly diminished rate. But the villagers' conception of the separation as a drama of great significance is based on the change in point of view which accompanies it. Henceforth, each small family is free to develop its own resources as it wishes. The different personalities of the brothers and their wives manifest themselves in the way they administer their property and raise their children, and, most importantly each brother can now freely give his entire loyalty to his own wife and children and consider all new situations from the standpoint of how they will affect the smaller unit. He is now at liberty, in the village view, to make decisions advantageous to himself, even at the expense of his brothers. The burden of consideration for the welfare of others has been lifted and the brothers are now as free as the rest of the villagers to be rivals of each other. This is not to say that all kinship rights and obligations towards one's adult brothers and sisters and their children disappear, but rather that the emphasis of most intense concern shifts at the time of property division. Indeed, it is generally agreed that the longer harmonious relations among the brothers can be maintained, the better. As a matter of fact, it is just for the sake of keeping good relations that the villagers claim they draw lots for the patrimony. They explain that by so doing, they can manage the business of dividing the property *me aghapi* (with love). No brother can blame any other for the particular share he happened to draw.

The villagers take it for granted that neither impartiality nor altruism is possible in situations which involve one's own interests. They do not believe that anyone, even one's own brother, can act fairly out of principle. Therefore, they feel, some mechanism is required to enforce equity. The strength of their mistrust of the fairness of others is illustrated by a villager's response to a question as to why the mother was not invited into the deliberations. (Mothers who are still active normally have the respect of their adult sons and participate in other kinds of decisions.) The son explained that it was because she might show favoritism toward one of the sons. This explanation was given in spite of the fact that the lot system effectively makes it impossible for anyone to implement favoritism. It is chance that makes the decision as to who gets which share and when faced with the operation of uncontrollable forces of the universe, the Greek villagers say, "*Ti na kanume,*" "What can we do?" From their point of view, adverse decisions left to chance are easier to bear than decisions made by self-seeking humans. Therefore, in situations over which they could have control, they prefer, if possible, to rearrange the situation into one in which chance, or fate, if you will, makes the final decision.

In the late 1950's, the number of households in which any married son was still living with his father and mother was small, and there were none in which several married sons were living this way. The reasons for this are first, the decreasing number of sons who are remaining farmers; second, the age distribution of Vasilika's male population (relatively few men in the marriageable age group); and third, the increasing age for marriage even of farming sons. Five of Vasilika's elementary family households were the result of the separation of two sets of brothers in the early 1950's. In Vasilika, therefore, the exist-

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596 ing composition of the households is a deceptive base for understanding the
594 principles of organization of households in the village. The existent situation is
178 one in which elementary family households predominate, but the mental construct which influences the formation of new households does not seem to have changed from the old expectation that several married farming brothers will live together. It remains as a latent principle, available for implementation whenever the circumstances warrant it.

Consequences of the Dowry System

428 The discussion of the dowry as a mechanism of inheritance for children
583 of farmers who remain farmers may now be summarized. The dowry is part of
182 a system in which children receive property through the parents of both their fathers and their mothers. Property from two sources merges in each generation
[594] and is redistributed in the next generation. Although patrilineally inherited lands (those passed from a father to his sons in each generation) have some continuity in space and have some continuity of ownership in the male line, such lands always constitute only one part of the total holdings of any particular elementary family. Therefore, in Vasilika and its vicinity, the pattern of land and money circulation through inheritance has two facets: one portion that is patrilineally inherited straight down the line of males; a second, distributed at marriage, that eventually circulates among unrelated elementary families. The system
[421] cannot be described as one in which women inherit from women, in spite of the legal residual control of a woman over her dower properties, because brothers have equal rights with their sisters to their mother's dower lands. In Vasilika, at least, there is neither an explicit nor an implicit pattern of giving daughters only dower property and sons only patrilineally inherited lands.

602 The combination of practices including the function of the dowry as
428 inheritance, land as a major form of property, and village exogamy have some
425 further consequences for the relation of property to groups of kinsmen in the Boeotian countryside. In spite of patrilocal residence and some patrilineally in-
[613] herited land, the descendants of a male line are not associated with any particular landed estates. Since no man owns or farms exactly the same holdings as his father farmed before him, nor the same holdings his brothers have, and since he himself will expect to work different lands in different communities even in the course of his own adult life, the permanent association of certain estates with
[583] certain lineages is obstructed (Friedl 1959b). Moreover, since dowries move
[582] down the generations and not across to a man of one's own generation who might use the property to marry off one of his daughters, there is no economic
[671] advantage to brother-and-sister exchange marriages. This situation is congruent
795 with both the Greek Orthodox Church's and the Civil Code's (Section 1357) prohibitions on marriages between sisters and brothers-in-law and between
[611] cousins to the third degree. This rule, as well as the bilateral reckoning of kin in Greece (Section 1356), prevents the transfer of property at marriage from resulting in either a series of equal exchanges between two sets of kin groups

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or in a regular pattern of circulation through several generations among particular sets of such groups. The control of property establishes social links between a man and his wife's relatives not only in the ways we have mentioned, but because his wife's parents and brothers and sisters have a legal and customary right to be consulted before the final alienation of dower property (Section 1418). These links last only one generation, however, so that in each generation a new network of relations between elementary families in the neighborhood develops, clustering around the management of dower properties. These matters are important because they reveal some of the economic and social structure of Vasilika and its neighborhood that is congruent with the type of relationships people, both kin and non-kin, have with each other (see Chapter 5).

One other situation occurs frequently enough in Vasilika to be worth mentioning. When a farmer has no sons to inherit his land and his house, but has a daughter, the father may acquire a man's assistance on the farm by importing a son-in-law. Such a man is called a *soghambros* in Vasilika; he is a husband who moves into his wife's household instead of vice-versa. The importation of a *soghambros* is also a solution to the problem of a young widow who has no grown sons to run the farm left by her husband and arranges a second marriage for herself with a man who is willing to work her first husband's holdings and her original dower lands. Since a *soghambros* is always a manager of, and the laborer on, property belonging to others and is expected to bring no property of his own with him, there is a slight social stigma attached to the status of Vasilika. The villagers say also that a *soghambros* is not "master in his own house." Certainly, the lot of a man who is not a master in his own house and comes as a stranger to a village where most of the other men have known each other all their lives is not a happy one. But a *soghambros* is not really dishonored by his position; the villagers, in this situation, as in so many others, recognize the practical necessities which brought about the arrangement and do not strongly condemn a man for making the best of his difficulties.

The dowry in Vasilika enters into the life of the villagers in other ways besides inheritance at marriage. It has long served as a means of upward social mobility for girls. Since, as we have seen, the marriage of a daughter is among the most important obligations of parents, the dowry comes into the consciousness of the villagers more often as a property requirement for marrying off their daughters than as a means of transmitting inheritance. When, in addition, the high value placed on upward social mobility is translated into an effort to find urban sons-in-law for one's daughters, the dowry emerges as a mechanism for increasing the social prestige of the family. Farmers are willing to give larger dowries in exchange for the great satisfaction they derive from having town sons-in-law. In Vasilika, the education of some sons has released land to add to the girls' dowries. Improved agricultural income has also enabled the farmers to give larger dowries. In the decade ending in 1959, every marriage of a Vasilika daughter whose father was in the upper half of the village's income range had been one with a man of respectable occupation who lived in a provincial town or in Athens. The husbands are tailors, small retail store-owners, or civil service workers. One young man is a photographer, another is a gymnasium

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professor who has become the principal of his gymnasium. In 1961, however, the son of a rather prosperous village farmer became attracted to a daughter of another Vasilika farmer with good land holdings. The young man asked his father to arrange the marriage for him, and, since all the conditions were entirely suitable, the young couple were engaged.

The trend in favor of town husbands prevails, however, among most of those who can afford it. Once a few girls had married urban men, the rivalry between village families led to greater efforts to secure town husbands for the others. Consequently, there has been an inflation in dowries which is alarming the villagers themselves. In the early 1950's, a *prika* worth $3,000 was enough for a town husband of no special prestige; by the late 1950's, the same kind of man was asking for one worth $4,500.

The inflation has had several consequences. Often the value of the dowry can no longer be limited to the share of the inheritance to which a girl is entitled. Farming sons are willing to give up some portion of their shares so that their sisters can "live well," as they put it. The brothers gain also from the added prestige and influence of the family. These in turn may make it possible for them to find a girl with a larger dowry than their property qualifications might warrant. A farmer so situated may make higher demands on the ground that his and his wife's children will have an urban aunt and uncle. The town sister might provide board for her nephews and nieces (girls are increasingly being sent to gymnasium) while they are in school and can also be expected to help them find jobs.

Another consequence of the dowry inflation is the increasingly late age of marriage for the village girls and the town men. It takes farmers longer to accumulate the larger amounts of cash for the dowry, and the prospective grooms longer to attain a position or income at least partially commensurate. Vasilika's girls who marry town men are usually between twenty-five and thirty. Those whose fathers have few land holdings, and consequently can offer only small dowries, have been marrying farmers from other villages or within Vasilika itself and have been in their early twenties at the time of the engagement.

Now let us consider the disposition of the dowry which goes with a girl marrying a town husband. First, if he accepts land as part of the dowry, he will of necessity have it worked by his wife's male relatives. In time, however, often by the end of the first decade of the marriage, the son-in-law may wish to expand his shop, or may wish to start building a house for himself or for his daughter's dowry, or may hear of a good investment opportunity. He will want money for these purposes, and so he begins, with his wife's consent and after consultation with her father, to arrange for the sale of dowry lands. Since the 1950's, prospective town grooms have been less willing to take land which they know they will eventually want to sell, and have been asking for cash or for a house in town. Anticipating this situation, several of Vasilika's farmers who have small daughters have begun to use their savings and even to sell a little land in order to build houses in Athens or in a provincial town so that by the time their daughters are ready to marry, the houses will provide the main portion of the dowry.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Nea Eleftherohori

[Villages of the Plains]

The smallness of the original farms and the large size of most families in Nea Eleftherohori began, even in the late 1930's, to present the villagers with a very serious problem. What were their children going to do? To divide the land was a desperate solution, inasmuch as the farms were already near the minimum that a single family could subsist upon. Somehow or other, all but one son had to be freed from the land, find some other form of livelihood, and leave the entire farm to be inherited by one brother. Hopeless poverty if not outright hunger was the certain lot of everyone who stayed on a divided inheritance.[3]

Nea Eleftherohori has been less fortunate than Lofiscos in still another respect. Situated at the foot of Mount Olympus, it lay just on the edge of the territory that guerrilla bands controlled in 1943–45 and again in 1947–49. These were, therefore, years of intense political insecurity in the village, and some loss of life. In 1947 the guerrillas organized a raid upon Nea Elef-

the new generation? If so, why not in Nea Eleftherohori? To be sure, that village pursued a more nearly subsistence style of agriculture between the wars; but this fact by itself does not seem enough to explain the contrast. Perhaps the prevalence of early marriages in Nea Eleftherohori, consequent upon the mode of land distribution in 1927, accounts for the difference, early marriages naturally bringing larger families; or perhaps some recklessness engendered by the catastrophic upheaval which the Asia Minor refugee population underwent encouraged large families, for there is in Nea Eleftherohori, as in all of Greece, a noticeable differential in birth rate between refugee and "old settler" groups, with the refugees standing higher.

3. In legal form, the Greek government retained title to all the land distributed to refugees and squatters after World War I. Part of the original justification for this policy was that it would permit the government to prevent excessive subdivision of peasant farms; and it was still the case in 1956 that legal tenure of each allotment was lodged in a single family head. This, however, did not prevent some families from dividing the allotments in practice among the heirs. Yet the fact that such divisions could not be legalized may perhaps have reinforced the reluctance of the families of Nea Eleftherohori to make them.

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

recent years, this was the one the villagers most praised, perhaps because it was the newest.

Very considerable inequalities in landholding exist within the village. As a result, some families have profited far more than others from the new prosperity. Since the Greek War of Independence (1821–30), if not before, landholdings in Old Corinth have not been disturbed by wholesale government action, of the sort characteristic in the northern part of the country. The processes of inheritance and marriage settlements, supplemented by purchase and sale of land – something almost unheard of in the northern villages – have resulted in the establishment of extremely complicated property relationships. Renting and sharecropping are both common. In addition, many fields are subject to concurrent rights held by several individuals. This situation arises when heirs have refrained from subdividing an inheritance because such division would reduce the fields to absurdly small dimensions. Instead it has long been the custom to cultivate such fields as a unit and to divide the proceeds, according to some agreed proportion, among all those who have a claim thereto. Over the generations, such concurrent rights have sometimes ramified widely; but the complications of remote family and property relationships are something Greek peasant farmers are able to keep very clear in their heads, with or without written documents.

A substantial proportion of the inhabitants of Old Corinth possess no land at all. They make a living by working for others, either for day wages or on a sharecropping basis. With the introduction of tomatoes and other vegetable crops, together with the revival of the currant market, a definite, though seasonal, shortage of labor has appeared. Substantial farmers (that is, men owning 10 to 20 acres of land) complained of not being able to find enough hands to help them cultivate their fields, even though the wages they paid in the currant fields were

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
EH1 Greece EH1
Paleo Corinthos

[Villages of the Plains]

higher than wages for unskilled labor in Athens. It is these wage rates, of course, that have attracted new settlers from the hills; but the fact that such labor is seasonal, lasting for only about four months in the year, means that families depending entirely on wage work are often in very hard straits.

The unparalleled prosperity that the years since 1953 have brought to the farmers of Corinth has been accompanied by the development of a number of nonagricultural occupations within the village. Several new stores and two new coffee houses have come into existence as well as the fancy restaurant for tourists. A number of persons also make a living as tourist guides. The richest men in the village, however, are merchants who have organized the delivery of tomatoes and other vegetables to the Athens market; they employ truck drivers, not all of whom live in the village. The two cooperatives employ, between them, a full-time, professionally trained secretary. The museum has a small staff of caretakers and curators. The village school had 210 pupils in 1956 and employed three teachers. A priest officiates in a handsome new church, which the villagers have built out of their own resources. Old Corinth, in other words, is developing into a small town, and ceasing to be a mere village. If the plan, only talked about in 1956, for establishing a small canning factory to preserve tomatoes is ever realized, the transition to a town status will become definite.

Nevertheless, from one point of view, the community has so far remained thoroughly traditional in its social organization. The substantial farmers of Old Corinth continue to adhere to age-old patterns of family life. When it comes time for their children to marry, the daughters are dowered, partly with money and partly with a share of crop land, vineyard and olive grove; and sons, similarly, inherit their portion of the parental farm. Clearly, if there are more than two children – and this is almost universally the case – the new generation will have to

6: McNeill H-5 (1947, 1956) 1957
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Paleo Corintho:

[Villages of the Plains]

face life on a smaller piece of land; but this problem does not seem especially acute to the larger farmers. An interesting indicator of this fact is that in 1956 only thirty boys from the village attended the gymnasium in New Corinth close by — a smaller number than Nea Eleftherohori was sending to a considerably more distant school, though the population of Old Corinth is nearly three times as great as that of the Macedonian village. As a matter of fact, the recent increases in the yield from Old Corinth's land have been so great that a new family can face life with equanimity, even owning only half as much land as their parents possessed.

For the landless segment of the population, and for those who own only a tiny plot insufficient to maintain a family anyway, the problem is quite different. Here the major consideration is not land but wages; and as long as there is work, and wages are comparatively good, the new generation can start off with little or nothing but a strong back and willing hands, and hope to make out about as well as their fathers have done. For them also, there is no overwhelming pressure to postpone marriage in order to keep up a standard of living.

As a result, the population statistics of Old Corinth do not show nearly so drastic a change from the prewar years as is evident in Nea Eleftherohori. Yet the birth rate has dropped in Old Corinth also. In the 1930's (when the population of the village was, of course, a good deal smaller) recorded births ranged between 58 and 46 each year. Since 1947 the range has been from 46 to 33. This change, however, has been nearly offset by a parallel drop in the death rate. Before the war, deaths averaged close to 30 each year; since 1947 the average has been a little over 12. The drop has mainly been due to the elimination of malaria through DDT; whereas Old Corinth was formerly one of the many places in Greece badly afflicted by that disease, there was no malaria in 1956.